

MINUTES
MANSFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Special Meeting
Wednesday, February 20, 2013
Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

Members present: Bresnahan, Dorgan, Ferrigno (5:40 pm), Hirschorn, McGuire, Thompson
Staff Present: Matt Hart, Town Manager; Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development;
Jennifer Kaufman, Natural Resources and Sustainability Coordinator/Mansfield
Tomorrow Project Manager

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Hart.

Approval of Minutes

- December 20, 2012 – Dorgan MOVED, Hirschorn SECONDED approval of the minutes as drafted. The motion passed unanimously.
- January 24, 2013 – McGuire MOVED, Thompson SECONDED approval of the minutes as drafted. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

- No public comment was received

New Business

1. **Mansfield Tomorrow Economic Development Strategy.** Peter Kwass of Mt. Auburn Associates and Larissa Brown of Goody Clancy asked the questions a series of questions regarding the community's goals/vision for economic development, need job growth and training, the relationship with the University's economic development initiatives, and whether the existing retail and service businesses meet the needs of the community. Each of the members identified specific concerns and goals for community economic development, which were summarized into three themes by the consultant team:
 - Economic development as a revenue generator that can help the town maintain and improve its current services while minimizing the growth of property taxes
 - How economic development relates to and supports the overall community identity and vision
 - How the community's vision and goals for economic development relate to market conditions – need to look not only at what we want, but also what we can get

Other key ideas raised by the commission included:

- Mansfield as part of a larger regional economy
- Sustainable economic development, including controlled/optimal level of growth, social equity and connection to education
- Need to streamline the permitting process and improve predictability based on conformance with town's vision
- Potential growth sectors such as light industry, housing, retail, education, medical, agriculture and tourism

Staff Reports

- **Business Activity.** Painter updated the Commission on new businesses (either open or anticipated) including the opening of Cumberland Farms at Four Corners and Michael's Arts and Crafts at Eastbrook Mall; a proposal for Windham Hospital offices at Storrs Commons; the projected openings for Geno's Grille, and the closing of the Mansfield General Store in Mansfield Center.
- **Events.** There were no events to report

- **Chamber of Commerce/MBPA Association.** Painter updated the Commission on upcoming Chamber workshops for businesses, including a 3-part series that started that evening, with the two future events scheduled for March 6th and March 27th. She will forward Chamber emails for those events to the Commission.
- **Other.** Hart noted he and Pat Bresnahan had met with a representative from the Windham EDC. As a follow-up, he would like to convene a regional economic development meeting with representatives from local EDCs. The meeting would rotate from town to town; Mansfield will take the lead with the first meeting.

The members requested that the next meeting focus on discussing an economic development vision for the town.

Old Business

1. **Water Supply EIE.** No discussion.
2. **Mansfield Tomorrow.** No discussion.
3. **Storrs Center Fiscal Impact Study.** No discussion.
4. **Election of Officers.**
 - **Chairman.** McGuire MOVED, Hirschorn SECONDED, nomination of Ferrigno for Chairman. The motion was approved unanimously.

Adjournment

McGuire MOVED, Ferrigno SECONDED to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
 Linda M. Painter, AICP
 Director of Planning and Development